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A REPORT ON THE ADULT EDUCATION WORKSHOP AND THE JOINT COMMITTEE AT MIAMI BEACH

Wide awake or not, members of the Joint Committee on Library Service to Labor Groups could be found at eight o'clock every morning, June 18 through the 22nd, attending one or the other meeting of the Adult Education Workshop.

This series was planned to help librarians think through the problems involved in planning an adult education program that would serve the needs of the community. Role playing, demonstrated use of different types of library materials, small group discussions, reports by observers, were the techniques by which every individual present was transformed into a participant in the learning process.

The first session for which over 300 librarians were enrolled, set the stage and pointed the way for the discussion to follow in the small groups which met on the following three mornings. They were to gather again at the last session on Friday to hear a summary of the workshop findings from the various observers and other leaders. The opening remarks included an explanation of the plan of procedure, the purposes of the workshop and its goals. Next there was a demonstration of the way a librarian would enlist the assistance of representatives of broad groups in planning for the adult education needs of the community. So that the situation would conform to reality, the audience was supplied in advance with information on a fictitious city of about 50,000 inhabitants. The age and sex distribution, occupations and industries, housing, income, educational facilities and other local facts were presented. Although this was not made clear, it was presumed that the librarian based her choice of representatives on the data which had been obtained in a preliminary survey. Using the role playing technique, spokesmen of the Chamber of Commerce, the Labor Council, the radio station, the Council of Social Agencies, the Public Schools and the Ministerial Association exchanged ideas with the librarian. If no conclusions were reached in this well-played skit, it did pose many questions which were raised at the buzz groups that followed. These were then presented to the large group and also formed the basis of much of the discussion in the small groups that met the following day. At these the librarians were asked to consider the relevance of the first day's discussion to their home situations.

The third sessions, which were devoted to demonstrations of the actual use of community resources in program planning, offered the various cooperating committees a chance to stage their own programs. The Joint Committee used role-playing as a preface to discussion of the theme "The Library Works with Labor Groups". Ruth Shapiro of the Milwaukee Public Library, who presided, introduced the three participants, Paul Bartolini of the Philadelphia Free Library, James Jones of the Dade County Central Labor Union and Sylvia Cline of the Omaha Public Library. They acted out a meeting of a chairman of an education committee and a business agent of a union with a librarian who had invited them to help her develop a library service to labor groups for her town. This was presumably her first contact with these labor leaders. Their exploratory talk was designed to enable her to better understand labor's needs and to make them more aware of the services that the library could offer to help satisfy these needs. The union representatives spoke of plans they had for classes in Parliamentary Procedure, Labor Law and Labor History, for which the librarian offered to lend book collections or to prepare bibliographies of available materials. When they told of a forthcoming conference, the librarian suggested a display of books and pamphlets. She pointed out that the union would have to take responsibility for supervision of the collections. Although the library had no film collection, they did have a film information center that could be of help to the union in locating suitable films and in helping them plan programs. When they discovered that there was a regular bookmobile service, they asked if there would be some way of having one of their largest organized plants included as a regular stop.

During the subsequent discussion which was led by Dorothy Kuhn Oko of The New York Public Library, it was emphasized that the union men seemed to know a great deal about their library, a situation that was far from typical. This raised the question of how much the librarian would have to do to acquaint them with her services before she could expect specific requests. More emphatically it was demanded "how can the librarian find the labor officials who will be helpful in planning a program, and how, having found them, can she get them to cooperate in developing it?" It was agreed that while the librarian needed to know as much as possible about labor in her community, any effort that could lead to a contact should be made. Finding names and addresses in the telephone directory, writing to or calling the central labor body, were among the first steps suggested. The union members present pointed out that union officials are hard to reach since many of them are working on their jobs during the day and may be on union business at night. Many of them can be reached in the evening at home or at the union. The important thing was to keep trying. When the discussion turned to building up a collection to fill the needs of labor groups, the importance of having local labor publications in addition to national AFL-CIO publications was pointed out. A clipping file of local newspapers dealing with local labor data, wage and employment information was also suggested. The representative of the Michigan CIO Council, Richard Kendzierski, a newcomer to the Joint Committee, said that labor often found librarians just as difficult to interest, as librarians had found labor. He told of an experiment he carried on of sending free copies of the Economic Review to the 450 public libraries in Michigan. (For the results of this experiment see the subsequent article in this issue of the Newsletter.) A more optimistic note on library-labor cooperation was sounded by James Jones and his colleague from the Dade County Central Labor Union, Lester Strom. Mr. Strom told of the library which he had started at his union's headquarters. While the Public Library had not been able to lend him any books, they had given him a list from which he had begun to make purchases. Copies of the "Guide for Developing Library Service to Labor Groups", which were distributed at various workshops, stimulated many to ask to be put on the mailing list for the Newsletter.

The second meeting for which the Joint Committee was responsible was co-sponsored by the Adult Education Board. This was devoted to "the Use of Audio-visual Materials for Senior Citizens." Dorothy Kuhn Oko opened the session by telling about

the film to be used entitled "POSSE; protect our social security equity." She explained that it was produced by the International Association of Machinists to memorialize their long-time editor and fellow member, who had devoted his last years to defending the Social Security Act against its political enemies. Fern Long, of the Cleveland Public Library, then spoke of the way a library can use films with senior citizens. In the discussion that followed the film, she emphasized the fact that no program should be planned without introducing some type of reading materials. She also brought out the value of resource people, in this case either a union member or someone who was informed about the social security program. When the discussants raised the question of what this film had to do with the senior citizen, Miss Long pointed out that older people are interested in a wide variety of topics and that often some past experience is touched off which will awaken a fresh interest. No conclusions were reached on the advantages of a segregated old-age program over a mixed-age program.

On the last day the final summing up offered many criticisms, both favorable and unfavorable. The chief weaknesses pointed out were lack of adequate preliminary briefing or clarity in the briefing and that a little too much machinery in some of the group sessions led to confusion and lost motion. Many felt that one of the outgrowths of this workshop should be preparation of "how-to-do-it" material. The Joint Committee's "Guide" which most participants had received, was pointed to as the type of material in question. The final conclusions were that the whole had been an extremely valuable experience. With certain changes they hoped something similar would be undertaken in 1957. In this the Joint Committee on Library Service to Labor Groups emphatically concurred.

ECONOMIC REVIEW TO PUBLIC LIBRARIES

In January of 1955, the Michigan CIO Council bought a subscription to the "CIO Economic Outlook" (changed to AFL-CIO Economic Review at the time of the merger) for approximately 300 public libraries in the state of Michigan.

The Economic Review, a monthly publication, prepared by the AFL-CIO Research Department, is an appraisal of current economic conditions and what unions think should be done about them. It also explains organized labor's position on such things as "Right to Work Laws", "Unemployment and Workmen's Compensation", "The Public School Problem", "Public Housing", "Automation" and others.

The purpose of this project was to make available to anyone in the state who was interested, labor's point of view on public issues of the day which directly or indirectly affect all citizens of the state.

When the year's subscription expired in January of 1956, we sent letters to all libraries receiving the "Review" asking for an evaluation of the project.

We received 60 replies, 48 of them praising the service and asking for renewal of the subscription, and 12 asking that it be dropped. Following are two representative letters from librarians.

"We find that students who need help with such topics as your paper gives, go first to our Reader's Guide of periodical literature. This gives a listing of all magazine articles, and as a rule, students are able to find what they need in Time, Newsweek, and U.S. News & World Report. The pamphlet may be read by local citizens upon occasion, but it is not used to any extent."

"The Economic Review is a welcome addition to our periodical collection. We rely on it to present labor's point of view in economic questions of popular interest and to balance the point of view of the weekly news magazines. We have been receiving it monthly for several years. We do make use of it in serving our readers at our headquarters branch that serves a large industrial suburban area."

Richard Kondziorski
Michigan CIO Council

LABOR-LIBRARY ACTIVITIES IN MIAMI BEACH AND MIAMI

As many of our readers know, there was some question about the Committee's participating in the ALA Conference because of the local labor difficulties in many Miami Beach hotels. When we received clearance from the local unions, we agreed to meet only in union hotels and to make some statement on our position while in Miami. The first stipulation was complied with and we were prepared to comply with the second. However, upon consultation with Bert Ross, International Vice-President of the Hotel and Restaurant Employees... Union, in charge of the strike, we were advised that for a number of reasons it would be best if we made no public statement. Mr. Ross expressed his appreciation of the interest the committee had shown in their problems. His letter expressing this appreciation follows:

Mrs. Dorothy Kuhn Oko, Chairman
Joint Committee on Library Service to Labor Groups
American Library Association
Fifth Avenue and 42nd Street
New York, New York

Dear Mrs. Oko:

May I extend through you the appreciation of our Local 255 and its members for the interest shown by your Committee during the convention of the American Library Association in our organization efforts in the Miami Beach hotels.

It is this kind of understanding of the conditions which exist in Miami Beach, so unfavorable to the employees in the hotels, and their desire to better their standard of living through unionization, which will ultimately help them and the American economy as a whole.

Thank you again for your active cooperation.

Fraternally yours,

(signed)

Bert H. Ross
International Vice President
Hotel & Restaurant Employees and
Bartenders International Union

Although this situation curtailed the activities of members of the committee so far as the ALA Conference was concerned, they were not entirely "on vacation". At the invitation of James Jones, Education Chairman of the Dade County Central Labor Union, Sylvia Cline and Dorothy Kuhn Oko spent one evening at a most interesting

session of the Dade County COPE, the new Committee on Political Education of the AFL-CIO. Mrs. Oko was asked to say a few words about the purposes of the Joint Committee and when she suggested that the Miami Public Library might be of help to their group she received an especially warm response. Miss Cline was invited to inspect the library which Lester Strom had established in the meeting hall.

There was also a meeting of the Joint Committee, at which plans for next year's Conference were discussed, among other items of business. The idea of planning a large meeting with a prominent labor speaker was given second place to the idea of cooperating with another Adult Education program. Do our readers agree or have they some other suggestions?

On the last day of the Conference, Mrs. Oko in company with Lester Strom, visited the Miami Public Library. Mr. Frank Sessa, the Director, who surprisingly enough was "at home" graciously conducted the two visitors through his attractive building and introduced them to Mr. Frank Eden in charge of Extension work. Mr. Eden was especially pleased to meet Mr. Strom as he had made several unsuccessful attempts to carry on some type of service for labor. Mrs. Helga Eason, Head of Community Relations Department, with whom Mrs. Oko had conferred earlier had also been most eager to develop labor contacts. Lester Strom agreed to bring James Jones to meet both Mr. Eden and Mrs. Eason in order to work out plans for labor-library cooperation.

This was a practical demonstration of the "How-to-do-it?" theme of the workshop and especially of the philosophy of the Joint Committee.

USE OF FILMS ON LABOR AND BY LABOR in The New York Public Library Collection

The film collection which started as a part of the materials assembled for use in the American Heritage project about three ago, now consists of about 112 films, on subjects more or less related to American history, culture and social problems. The collection includes seven films about trade union activities.

Since there has been little general publicity given to the collection, unions have learned about it largely through personal contact with the Labor Education Specialist. Whenever an opportunity is presented, she makes a point of suggesting the use of films. Where the response is favorable, she helps work out a suitable program.

From a slow beginning there has been a steady increase in the use of films on labor and on other subjects by trade union groups, as well as the use of labor films by non-union groups. Here are some of the figures for the period, 1953 to 1955:

Use of Labor Films in the Library

<u>Title</u>	<u>Year acquired</u>	<u>By unions</u>	<u>By non-unions</u>
Local 100	1954	1	0
People of the Cumberland	1952	1	3
Shop Steward	1954	6	1
Union at Work (TWU)	1952	0	4
Union Local	1953	2	3
With These Hands	1952	2	16
Working Together	1952	0	2
		12	29

List of Non-Union Films Borrowed by Unions

America the Beautiful	Lincoln Speaks at Gettysburg
American Cowboy	Man in the Twentieth Century
And Now Miguel	Mighty Muskie
Brotherhood of Man	Mt. Vernon in Virginia
The City	One God
Conspiracy in Kyoto	Our Living Constitution
Does It Matter What You Think	People of the Cumberland
Don Kingman	People along the Mississippi
Due Process of Law Denied	Picture in Your Mind
Family Outing	Pressure Groups
Freedom of the Press	Roots of Happiness
Give Me Liberty	Silks and Sulkies
Grandma Moses	Supreme Court
Grant Wood	Valley of the Tennessee
Hunting with a Camera	World Without End
You Can Win Elections	

Unions That Have Borrowed Both Classes of Films

District 65, Wholesale and Department Store Union
Government and Civic Employees, Local 1707
Hotel and Club Employees, Local 6
Hotel and Restaurant Employees, Local 325
International Association of Machinists, Local 858
International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers, Local 3
International Ladies Garment Workers Union
National Association of Broadcast Employees
New York Hotel Trades Council
Photo Engravers, Local 1
Textile Workers Union - CIO
Typographical Union, Local 6

These figures have encouraged us to make some more organized efforts to increase the use of both types of films by all labor groups.

Dorothy Kuhn Oko
Labor Education Specialist

LABOR PUBLICATIONS FOR A LABOR SERVICE

- AFL-CIO NEWS - Weekly newspaper of the merged labor movement; gives widespread coverage to labor events and to events of interest to labor.
\$1.25 / yr.
- AFL-CIO EDUCATION NEWS AND VIEWS - Monthly newsletter on union education activities, labor films, pamphlets and books. \$1.00 / yr.
- COLLECTIVE BARGAINING REPORT - Monthly issued by Department of Research, AFL-CIO, giving facts and figures on bargaining issues.
- ECONOMIC TRENDS AND OUTLOOK - Monthly issued by AFL-CIO Economic Policy Committee, giving labor's view of the social economy. Free (?)

LABOR PUBLICATIONS FOR A LABOR SERVICE (continued)

LABOR EDUCATION - a report by the Inter-University Labor Education Committee on programs, past, present and future. Free on request from the Committee, 1303 University Avenue, Madison, Wisconsin.

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

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The opinions expressed in this Newsletter do not necessarily represent the policy or views of the Joint Committee on Library Service to Labor Groups of the American Library Association.

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